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⑥ Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 222D Aviation Battalion EUG. ⑧

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

⑨ Operational rept. for quarterly period ending 31 Oct 66.

IN REPLY REFER TO
AGAM-P (M) (10 Feb 67) FOR OT

16 February 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters,
222d Aviation Battalion

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

⑪ 8 Nov 66

⑫ 20 p.

1. Forwarded as inclosure is Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 222d Aviation Battalion for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1966. Information contained in this report should be reviewed and evaluated by CDC in accordance with paragraph 6f of AR 1-19 and by CONARC in accordance with paragraph 6c and d of AR 1-19. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to the Commandants of the Service Schools to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations, and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

⑬ OACSFOR

Kenneth G. Wickham

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⑭ OT-RD-660348

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VUNG TAU

222^D AVIATION BATTALION



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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 222D AVIATION BATTALION
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96291

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8 November 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1966

TO: See Distribution

Section I

Significant Unit Activities

A. GENERAL: Under a revised plan for base development of the Vung Tau Airfield, the 222d Aviation Battalion was assigned a new billeting area in the Northwest Cantonment area. This relocation allows all companies of the battalion to be located in one area and provides space for the two USAF squadrons to be formed in December. Tropical wooden huts are being constructed for quarters and administration through an Army contract and the battalion self-help program. Construction of the area is nearing completion and two companies have moved into the new area.

Two OH-23G helicopters were issued to the battalion on 24 August 1966. These aircraft are used for command and liaison flights. The requirement for two armed UH-1B helicopters continues to exist.

Operation Red Leaf, commencing in August, is progressing satisfactory. No major problems have developed and a highly successful transfer is anticipated by 31 December 1966.

B. MISSION: The 222d Aviation Battalion provides fixed wing support to the III and IV Corps. This support was rendered to the following units and agencies:

USARV
JUSPAO
USAD
MACV

SPECIAL FORCES
FIELD FORCES V II
SENIOR ADVISOR IV CORPS
JUSMAG

C. ORGANIZATION (C)

1. During the reporting period, the 222d Combat Aviation Battalion was organized and located as follows:

a. Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Vung Tau

(1) 85th Medical Detachment

b. 54th Aviation Company (AM-FW), Vung Tau

(1) 255th Transportation Detachment

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- c. 57th Aviation Company (AM-FW), Vung Tau
 - (1) 138th Transportation Detachment
- d. 61st Aviation Company (AM-FW), Vung Tau
 - (1) 326th Transportation Detachment
- e. 73rd Surveillance Airplane Company (OV-1), Vung Tau
- f. 134th Aviation Company (AM-FW), Can Tho
 - (1) 260th Transportation Detachment

In addition, the 134th Aviation Company has one lift platoon at Soc Trang and the 54th Aviation Company has a lift platoon at Tan Son Nhut.

D. COMMAND (V)

1. The significant change of command within the battalion was: LTC Athol M. Smith assumed command of the 222d Aviation Battalion on 17 August 1966. The departing Commander was LTC Ellsworth F. Vassar.

E. PERSONNEL (C)

1. General: During the reporting period only one incident of personnel turbulence occurred. The 54th Aviation Company had fifteen officers rotate in the first part of August. Replacement officers were not received until the latter portion of the month. The units affected by Operation Red Leaf have felt the effects of the slow rate of input of USAF officers, however, there has been no serious threat to mission accomplishment. The turn over of personnel for this quarter is indicated below. These figures do not include USAF personnel

	<u>OFFICER</u>		<u>ENLISTED</u>	
	<u>Gain</u>	<u>Loss</u>	<u>Gain</u>	<u>Loss</u>
August	15	17	101	56
September	14	23	131	120
October	17	20	120	90
TOTAL	46	75	352	266

2. Awards and Decorations: A total of 589 awards have been processed during this quarter.

3. Courts and Boards: Three Warrant Officers have applied for USAF direct officer commissions and two enlisted men have applied for USAF direct Warrant Officer commissions. There have been no OCS applicants during the quarter and no Court Martials.

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4. Civio Actions: The battalion has agreed to sponsor a "New Life" hamlet for relocating 240 Vietnamese families. Preliminary arrangements for the relocation have been made. The project is awaiting approval by GVN authorities in Saigon.

F. INTELLIGENCE (C)

1. General: The activities of the S-2 section included no items of significant interest. The daily operation revolved mainly around security clearances which involved the following activities:

a. Top Secret Clearances issued by USARV:	11
b. Secret Clearances issued by USARV:	36
c. Confidential Clearances issued by this command:	59
d. Top Secret Clearances validated:	5
e. Secret Clearances validated:	59
f. Top Secret Crypto granted by 12th Avn Gp	1
g. Interim Secret Clearances issued:	17
h. Security debriefings conducted:	162
i. Local Records Checks conducted:	70
j. Security Clearances denied by 1st Avn Bde	1

2. Hostile Fire: Aircraft of this battalion received twenty-nine hits. Ninety-nine other aircraft were fired upon, however none were hit.

G. OPERATIONS

1. General: During this quarter the battalion conducted support type operations on each of the ninety-two days, committing an average of forty-eight aircraft daily. Missions conducted were radio relay, visual, photographic and electronic reconnaissance, cargo resupply by air drop, low-level-extraction (LOLEX), air landed resupply, medical evacuation, and troop transport. Statistics generated in support of these missions are as indicated in annex A.

2. Operation Red Leaf: During the month of August, USAF personnel were assigned to this battalion. To date a total of sixty-eight aviators have been assigned. Transition of these officers has progressed smoothly and all are flying on operational missions. During this quarter USAF aviators logged approximately 6,000 flying hours. The USAF aviators possess a wealth of flying experience, are well motivated, and enthusiastic, which materially contributes to an effective transfer program.

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3. Training:

a. Flight Crew Training: In-country orientation and local checkouts are being performed whenever a newly arrived aviator joins a unit. The main emphasis for flight training is being placed upon in-country transition for USAF aviators joining CV-2B units. The program of training the USAF personnel as aircraft commanders and instructor pilots has proven successful and is presently providing a nucleus of qualified personnel to train newly assigned USAF aviators. To date twenty-two of the sixty-eight USAF aviators assigned have been qualified as aircraft commanders and five qualified as instructor pilots in the CV-2B.

b. Mandatory Training: Lectures and conferences are given weekly by each unit on subjects prescribed by the Master Training Schedule. During the quarter, 50% of all classroom training was devoted to subjects company commanders deemed necessary. This "free time" allowed each company commander greater flexibility in training his unit in the respective area of operation.

H. LOGISTICS:

1. Construction: Construction of new battalion facilities required close monitoring of various projects to plan for their effective utilization. To coordinate unit moves and to keep abreast of the rapidly growing area, a Battalion Planning Board was formed composed of the Executive Officer, Battalion S-4 and Company Commanders. This body has been meeting at three week intervals throughout the period and has been effective in eliminating unilateral moves by the units. Battalion self-help teams were organized to construct facilities which were not programed or were deleted from the contract program. These teams have been highly effective in the construction of hutments and the renovation of other facilities.

2. Aircraft Revetments: Emphasis continued through the period on aircraft revetting. The exclusive use of bomb casings, available through the Air Force at Bien Hoa, is providing uniformity throughout the battalion. 226 casings have been obtained thus far.

3. Inspection: Command Supply and Maintenance inspections were conducted on all CV-2 units to determine status of property and to prepare the units for transfer. Primary areas inspected were unit supply, motor maintenance and aircraft maintenance. Other companies will be inspected during the next quarter.

4. Command & Liaison Helicopters: Two UH-1B's and one U-6 were approved as MTOE items in substitutions authorized by TOE. However, neither the UH-1B's nor the U-6 are available for issue in the Theater. Two OH-23G were issued and provide battalion headquarters with a limited capability for command liaison missions.

I. SIGNAL (U)

1. General: During the reporting period emphasis was placed on expansion and improved reliability of battalion communications.

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9 a. Radio: Substantial improvements were made in the reliability of FM communications with the 12th Aviation Group. Utilization of Single Side Band (HF), as a backup system, provides adequate contact during unusable FM period.

b. Teletype: The installation of backup equipment and the assignment of two school trained operators has improved the teletype capability of the battalion. During this reporting period the number of messages sent and received to the 12th Aviation Group teletype circuit has increased from 27 to 163. This circuit has become the most reliable and responsive communications link between the battalion and 12th Aviation Group.

c. Wire: The intra-battalion wire system continues to be a necessary augmentation to the Vung Tau telephone service. The network initially installed for the dissemination of alert information has expanded to include a present total of six switchboards and 67 telephones. At the close of this reporting period the battalion switchboard handled an average of 243 calls per day. The "Hot Line" telephone circuits between this headquarters, MACV and FF V II continues to be mandatory in the conduct of battalion operation.

2. Problems: To date the battalion headquarters has been issued 29 of the 54 items of signal equipment authorized by TOE. Tactical vehicular radios, necessary in the ground defense plan of the Vung Tau Airfield, are seriously lacking and follow up actions, through supply channels have produced a slow influx of this equipment. Requirements for all radio equipment have been coordinated with the 12th Aviation Group Signal Officer. Present communications operations are heavily dependent on the use of hand receipted equipment from the assigned companies.

J. SAFETY

1. The requirement for outside support from armed helicopters became apparent when, as a result of a mid-air collision, on 16 Oct 66, an OV-1A aircraft crashed in an insecure area. Recovery was delayed until armed helicopters arrived. Procedures to cover this requirement were included in a revised pre-accident plan.

2. Accidents and Losses:

Combat Losses - None
Accidents - 7

3. Problem Areas:

a. A problem continues as a result of crowded taxiways, parking aprons and obstacles on or adjacent to fixed wing strips. Collision with a jeep, and a helicopter, caused incidental damage to two aircraft. Obstacles to landing traffic were removed or reported to responsible headquarter for appropriate action.

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Section II

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COMMANDERS OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PART I OBSERVATIONS (LESSONS LEARNED)

A. (U) PERSONNEL

1. Assignment Instructions

a. ITEM: Late Assignment Instructions

b. DISCUSSION: Assignment instructions for personnel rotating are not arriving within the prescribed time frame. The lack or late arrival of further assignment instructions creates morale problems and generates an administrative burden in attempting to secure the assignment instructions. Personnel become very apprehensive when their DEROS approaches and they do not have accurate information upon which to make future plans or to advise their dependents.

c. OBSERVATION: Individuals in a combat Theater should be informed at the earliest practical time of their next assignment. Late assignment instructions are leading to a lack of faith in announced Army policies and can contribute to the loss of extremely capable personnel.

B. (C) OPERATIONS

1. Battalion Operations

a. ITEM: Operational Control of Organic Aircraft

b. DISCUSSION: This headquarters has the mission to provide, on a daily basis, fifty general and/or direct support aircraft to eight separate headquarters within USARV. In the direct support role, six headquarters control the operations of thirty-three aircraft by assigning missions direct to the respective aviation companies. The remaining seventeen aircraft in the general support role, are committed as directed by two headquarters directing missions through the battalion operations. From an overall operational break out, 66% of the aircraft are totally excluded from battalion control, while 34% of the aircraft are committed by higher headquarters through the battalion headquarters. It is apparent, that the battalion is not effectively engaged in operational employment of its assigned aircraft. Under this arrangement, the battalion is confronted with the undesirable position of not being able to effectively correlate the number of aircraft committed and the number of flying hours the missions require with the scheduled maintenance support. A more efficient utilization of aircraft and available flying hours could be realized if all mission requirements were placed on the battalion. A more valid appreciation of the flying hour rate correlated with the maintenance capability would be realized.

c. OBSERVATIONS: The battalion operations does have the capability to receive and coordinate all mission requirement. The capability should be exploited.

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2. Mission Accomplishment vs Loss of Aircraft and Crew

a. ITEM: Mission Accomplishment in Adverse Weather Conditions

b. DISCUSSION: This battalion has operated under the philosophy that the final decision for mission accomplishment rests with the aircraft commander. If, because of adverse weather or other conditions beyond his control, the aircraft commander believes that the aircraft limitations or his ability to control the aircraft will be exceeded, he is to delay the mission until such time as he can accomplish it safely. This procedure is taught at Army Aviation schools, and has been emphasized at all Commanders Conferences and safety classes. Perhaps the most significant event of this quarter was an incident which established a precedent which changed the philosophy of Army fixed wing operations in Viet Nam. An aviator flying a radio relay mission in support of a tactical unit, encountered thunderstorms which could not be avoided. The aircraft commander, believing the aircraft stress limitations and his ability to control the aircraft has been reached, requested permission to land, but was instructed to remain airborne.

c. OBSERVATION: The final decision in operating an aircraft in the performance of a mission lies not with the aircraft commander but with the ground commander. The decision by the ground commander that directs the aviator to continue the mission, irrespective of the hazards involved, has altered the philosophy of Army Aviation operations in Viet Nam.

3. Southwest Monsoon

a. ITEM: Effects of Southwest Monsoon on Air Operations in III and IV Corps areas.

b. DISCUSSION: Reports on the monsoon conditions in the III and IV Corps Area forecasted an unrealistic condition of reduced air operations in the III and IV Corps Area, however, experience gained during this season proves otherwise. Flying time actually increased during the recent monsoon season and at no time were missions completely cancelled because of weather. The following characteristics of the Southwest Monsoon were noted:

(1) Reduced visibility, caused by rain showers, last for only 10-15 minutes.

(2) Rain showers always move from West to East and cover relatively small areas.

(3) Ceilings generally are 2000 feet except in rain showers and then they may go to indefinite,

(4) Only light turbulence is prevalent in all clouds except heavy thundershowers.

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(5) Aircraft can be operated, within relative safety, in IFR conditions without IFR clearances. (Radar Flight Following)

c. OBSERVATION: The Southwest Monsoon will not hamper or reduce fixed wing operation to any significant degree in the III and IV Corps area.

4. Mission Scheduling of CV-2

a. ITEM: Missions of CV-2 Aircraft

b. DISCUSSION: The misutilization of CV-2B aircraft to transport officers and enlisted personnel on administrative and staff missions over long distances continues to be a major problem. With the CV-2B flying hour program already strained to its limits, it is difficult to justify the utilization of a STOL aircraft for extended administrative flights. In many cases these missions service airfields capable of handling the largest jet transports and involve distances as much as three to four hundred miles. This unit receives support missions almost daily which generate between eight and nine hours of flying time and only results in as few as 30 or 40 passengers and less than one ton of cargo being transported. The Battalion continues to support many other organizations which properly utilize the capabilities of the CV-2B. These agencies are constantly requesting additional CV-2B aircraft support. This support can not be provided because of established commitment priorities. USAID and Special Forces, during the month of September and October, requested additional aircraft, almost daily, to assist in flood relief operations in the IV Corps area.

c. OBSERVATION: Scheduling the CV-2B on administrative missions which carry few passengers or a small amount of cargo over a long distance is poor utilization of the aircraft.

5. Loading Operations

a. ITEM: Lack of Cargo Handling Equipment

b. DISCUSSION: Within the entire IV Corps area there are only four airfields that have cargo handling equipment. Much time is lost in unloading CV-2B aircraft by hand. Aircraft ramps, cargo doors and tail sections have been damaged on numerous occasions when palletized or large pieces of equipment have been pushed out of the aircraft onto the ground.

c. OBSERVATION: Valuable time is lost and unnecessary damage to aircraft results when there is no cargo handling equipment available. It would be impractical and uneconomical to have a fork lift at every strip, however, it would require little effort or expense to issue at least four sections of rollers to the Advisory or Special Forces team using the airfield. It would then be possible for them, when they were expecting an aircraft, to mount the rollers on either a 3/4 or 2 1/2 ton truck, remove the sides from the truck and permit direct roll off, roll on loading and unloading procedures.

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6. CV-2B Aerial Delivery

a. ITEM: Lack of Aerial Delivery Equipment

b. DISCUSSION: During the recent flooding of the Delta area, Special Forces were unable to secure sufficient equipment i.e.; cargo parachutes, extraction chutes, straps, etc., to permit adequate resupply of their outposts and camps by CV-2B airdrop and LOLEX methods. Most of the airfields in the northern portion of the Delta were flooded and it was impossible to air land supplies. Delivery equipment available to the Special Forces became wet and could not be properly dried after use. This equipment began to mildew and rot after a few uses and a number of malfunctions were experienced on deliveries when parachutes tore and straps parted.

c. OBSERVATION: The capabilities of Army Aviation, in support of ground troops, to deliver supplies at inaccessible airfields is seriously reduced when supported units do not have the necessary aerial delivery equipment. Units have not been adequately oriented on the type or the amount of equipment required for operations of this magnitude.

C. (U) LOGISTICS

1. OPERATION RED LEAF

a. ITEM: Equipment Transfer

b. DISCUSSION: On 12 Aug 66, representatives of USARV and 7th Air Force met to discuss the draft USARV implementing Plan for Operation Red Leaf. The plan was to have been sent to the field as soon as it was staffed and put into final form. It was received by this battalion on 22 Oct 66 although the plan is dated 15 Aug 66.

During this period, continual inquiries were received as to more detailed guidance on turn-over of CV-2B units. Unit commanders and USAF senior representatives were particularly interested in disposing of property in excess to Air Force needs, i.e.; weapons, field gear, etc. No authority could be given to laterally transfer or turn-in these items due to, 12th Group letter, Subject: Letter of Instruction, Transfer of CV2B Resources to the U.S. Air Force (U), dated 26 July 66, which specifically prohibited such action.

On 22 Oct 66, USARV and 7th Air Force representatives again met at Saigon. This meeting was for the purpose of appointing an "Ad Hoc" committee to develop detailed implementing instructions for the transfer of material resources to the Air Force.

During the period 23-25 Oct 66, the "Ad Hoc" committee met and outlined plans for transfer of: 1. Aircraft, 2. TOE/TA/Station property and 3. Repair parts. Some issues between Army and Air Force, relative to transfer of aircraft, remained unresolved and had to be referred to higher headquarters for decision.

Final implementing plan is now being staffed at USARV and 7th Air Force and is expected to be out to the field by mid-November.

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c. OBSERVATION: Without specific guidance from higher headquarters, planning for transfer of CV-2 units has been delayed considerably. Many actions have been taken at the initiative of operating level commanders in order to effect an orderly transfer of responsibilities to the Air Force. Further delay in receipt of final instructions may result in less utilization of certain Army equipment and as the formal transfer date approaches, a decrease in operational efficiency.

2. BUILDING CONSTRUCTION:

a. ITEM: Self-Help Program

b. DISCUSSION: A reduction in funds for contract construction at the beginning of the quarter resulted in many facilities, previously programmed for the Vung Tau Airfield, being out from the program. Building materials were still in abundant supply, so the self-help program was initiated to complete quarters and other facilities which were deleted from the contract program. Initially, a team of four men was formed by Headquarters Company. Later, another eight-man team was formed using men from all of the companies. Both teams began building wooden tropical hutments. The team now totals 1 OIC, 16 EM and 4 Vietnamese Nationals, and they are working at four different sites. To date they have constructed 5 NCO hutments and 5 regular hutments. They have also renovated a room for a conference room and started construction on a two-story hutment. Plans are to construct 2 more NCO hutments, 7 more regular hutments and 2 more two-story hutments. Each unit, to improve the areas in which they live, has also had smaller teams renovating buildings, constructing sidewalks, etc.

c. OBSERVATION: Significant manpower resources have been diverted to this program, as it is deemed essential for unit welfare and morale. The side benefits of unit esprit and a sense of accomplishment in "doing it yourself" adequately justify this program.

3. AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE:

a. ITEM: Programmed hours versus actual hours flown.

b. DISCUSSION: All Air Mobile Fixed Wing Companies (one U1-A, and three CV-2) are exceeding their programmed flying hours by a significant amount. The following data for the quarter is provided:

<u>AIRCRAFT</u>	<u>AVG NO ASGC</u>	<u>PROGRAMMED HOURS</u>	<u>HRS FLOWN</u>	<u>OVER</u>
U1-A	14	2520	4018	1498
CV-2	45	9870	12,669	2799

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Experience gained in Vietnam indicates that the present number of hours can be supported in maintenance man hours, providing at least 15 aircraft are assigned to each company. This allows latitude in the scheduling of missions and maintenance.

c. OBSERVATION: Parts procurement appears to be lagging somewhat and should be revised based on the number of hours actually being flown or the programmed figure for RVN increased, thereby increasing parts procurement.

4. PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE:

a. ITEM: Cyclinder Compression Checks

b. DISCUSSION: By checking the compression on all cyclinders while an aircraft is down for scheduled maintenance, several probable cyclinder failures have been discovered before they created a demand maintenance problem.

c. OBSERVATION: Compression checks are not required as a part of the normal periodic inspections. It is felt that this preventive maintenance check has discovered potential maintenance difficulties before a failure occurred, and has been beneficial in reducing aircraft down time.

5. GV-2B NOSE GEAR DOOR

a. ITEM: Failure of the shaft assembly.

b. DISCUSSION: The 61st Aviation Company has experienced difficulty with the nose gear doors not closing completely with the gear in the up or down position during retraction tests. The difficulty is caused by the crank assembly, P/N C4EH1220-5, due to the lack of lubrication. This condition results in a seizure between the two assemblies. The shaft assembly is designed to be permanently lubricated, however, after approximately 2400 hours the shaft assembly has been found to require lubrication. There are no provisions made to perform this required lubrication.

c. OBSERVATION: Seizure between the two assemblies can be alleviated by removing the shaft assembly for lubrication. Due to the time involved and the possibility of damaging the machined surface of the shaft, it is recommended that a grease fitting be installed. The crank and shaft assemblies could then properly lubricated on a scheduled basis. An RFP (E20200) was submitted on 24 October 1966.

6. (U) SAFETY

1. Airfield Control

a. ITEM: Joint Fixed and Rotary Wing Operations:

b. DISCUSSION: The problem of the incompatibility of joint helicopter and fixed wing operations at field strips continues. During the conduct

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of a large scale tactical helicopter operation from field strips located within the IV Corps area, the 13th Aviation Battalion and the 25th Air Traffic Control Company operates an air traffic control station. The helicopters either disregard the instructions of the controller or fail to inform the controller prior to entering the traffic pattern for landing. Helicopters hover on and off the active runway without permission. A CV-2B, carrying a communications jeep, required four approaches before a landing could be made at a staging strip. On each approach ground control had cleared the CV-2B to land. In each instance, either a helicopter cut in front of the Caribou or hovered onto the runway necessitating a go around. On another recent mission, a CV-2B, after being told to hold South of the field for approximately 20 minutes, was finally cleared for an approach and on final, was cleared to land. A flight of six helicopters hovered onto the strip in preparation for take off as the CV-2B touched down. A go around could not be made as the first helicopter was already lifting off. An emergency stop was made by using full reverse and locking the brakes. The flight commander of the helicopter flight had not received permission from ground control prior to moving onto the runway nor had he visually cleared the area.

c. OBSERVATION: A field strip, where a ground control is in operation, instructions of the controller must be followed as closely as instructions received from a control tower.

2. Crash Rescue

a. ITEM: Security at Remote Crash Sites.

b. DISCUSSION: An OV-1A of this battalion crashed in an insecure area following a mid-air collision. A delay was experienced in recovering bodies and establishing a maintenance recovery team on the ground. Gunships were not immediately available to provide security. The CH-47 aircraft at the site, could not land until gunships provided ground security. Helicopter companies habitually furnish security for their own downed aircraft. A fixed wing battalion has no such organic capability.

c. OBSERVATION: The battalion pre-accident plan has been revised to outline procedures whereby adequate security can be expeditiously obtained.

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Section III

Recommendations

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A. PERSONNEL (U) None

B. INTELLIGENCE (U) None

C. OPERATIONS (U)

1. The doctrine of centralized control and decentralized execution be employed at battalion level to increase the efficient utilization of organic aircraft assigned to the battalion.

2. Ground units intensify their logistical and training efforts to provide more responsive ground handling procedures for aircraft cargo loading.

3. Priority be established to assign critical tactical missions to CV-2B's and reduce long haul administrative missions.


4. Commitment of aircraft be based upon a forecast flying hour rate as opposed to a fixed number of aircraft.

D. LOGISTICS (U) None

E. SIGNAL (U) None

F. SAFETY (U): That helicopter pilots be continually reminded of the fact that fixed wing aircraft are less maneuverable than a helicopter when landing and that fixed wing aircraft are extremely vulnerable to the effects of laser wash during landing and taxing.

ANNEX A: 222d Avn Bn
Statistics


ATHOL M. SMITH
LTC, Infantry
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

- 1 Copy Thru Channels to ASCFOR (DA)
- 1 Copy to CG, USARPAC
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- 1 Copy to CG, 1st Cmbt Avn Bde
- 2 Copies thru 12th Cmbt Avn Co to ASCFOR (DA)
- 1 Copy to CO, 12th Cmbt Avn Gp

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SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1966

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ANNEX A

222D COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION STATISTICS

Operational Hours	21,078.5
Sorties Flown	28,894
Passengers Carried	146,766
Cargo Transported (Tons)	13,522.4
Missions Performed	20,242
Aircraft Hit by Ground Fire	29
Aircraft Losses (Non Combat)	4
Ammunition Expended	
2.75" FFSR	2,844
50 CSI	9,665

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AVGC-SC

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SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period ending 31 October 1966,
Reports Control Symbol CSFOR-65

HEADQUARTERS, 12TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP, APO 96491

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff Force Development, Department of the Army,
Washington, D.C. 20310

1. Two (2) copies of Operational Report for quarterly period ending 31 October 1966, of the 222nd Combat Support Aviation Battalion are forwarded in compliance with USARV Regulation 870-2, dated 19 July 1966.

2. Comments are included on observations and recommendations made by the battalion commander:

a. PERSONNEL: The observation (page 6) concerning late receipt of personnel assignment instructions was valid until 15 October 1966. A previous average of ten to twenty days delay was reduced to an elapsed time of five to eight days from the transmission of instructions issued by Department of Army to receipt by 12th Group Headquarters. Most people now receive orders with more than thirty days remaining until their rotation.

b. OPERATIONS:

(1) The observation (page 6) that the battalion has the capability to receive and coordinate all missions is valid. This is a situation where the Theater Headquarters and its next subordinate Headquarters direct actions in a company sized unit six command levels below it. Without having full operational control of assets, the battalion and its subordinate units cannot program maintenance activities or pilot flying hours. By allocation of airplane companies, one unit may be consistently overflowed while another unit does comparatively little. This in fact happened in another battalion during Operation APPLEBORO where one O-1 company on a directed allocation to MCV missions flew about 500 hours while its neighbor flew over 1000 hours in the same time period in APPLEBORO. The over-committed unit soon becomes unable to produce the numbers of aircraft required because maintenance and supply are unable to keep pace.

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Recommend that O&CON of all aviation assets in the 222nd Aviation Battalion be returned to the 12th Combat Aviation Group and that all mission requests for those assets be directed through the Army Aviation Element, II AFV so that maintenance and flight hours can be more economically managed. This should give greater efficiency.

(2) The observation (page 7) that the final decision in operating an aircraft in the performance of a mission lies not with the aircraft commander but with ground commander is not entirely valid. The aircraft commander is responsible for the safety of his aircraft, crew, and passengers aboard; however, it is conceivable that a tactical emergency could be so extreme that failure of an aircraft to continue a mission might result in the loss of many other lives. In that case, the possible loss of an aircraft and crew might be an acceptable risk to the ground commander who must assume the responsibility for directing the continuance of the aircraft mission. This headquarters recognizes that aviation safety considerations may sometimes become a subordinate factor in such combat emergency situations.

(3) A valid observation (page 8) is that scheduling of CV-2 aircraft on missions which do not make full use of the aircraft capabilities is poor utilization. Due to a shortage of all types of aircraft, it may be necessary on occasion to substitute a type aircraft to perform a mission which is not entirely suited to the aircraft characteristics. Helicopters have been used on cargo lifts from airfield to airfield when either runway conditions precluded fixed wing traffic or fixed wing aircraft were not available. Although not desirable, apparent misutilization of a type aircraft is not always avoidable. In fact, when this is the only way to do an essential job, it is not mis-utilization.

(4) Lack of material handling equipment (page 8) continues to hamper air cargo handling in Vietnam. This has been remarked on in a previous report.

(5) Many ground units have arrived, and new units continue to arrive, in the airmobile environment of Vietnam without adequate airmobile training and airmobile support equipment (slings, nets, clevises). Although the ground unit must furnish and maintain its own support equipment, the aviation units should show them what items are required and how to use them. Aggressive action to educate supported units has been taken by helicopter units of Group as a continuing requirement. When an apparent need exists for an aviation unit to assist a ground unit by providing equipment lists and demonstrating equipment, the aviation unit must take the initiative.

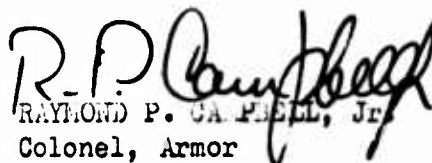
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d. LOGISTICS: Operation Red Leaf (page 9) transferring Army CV-2B assets to the U.S. Air Force has produced some occasional problems. This headquarters has participated in all planning meetings concerning the operation. Considering the unique character of the transfer, no major difficulties have been experienced and none are anticipated. No loss of CV-2B operational support capability is expected upon completion of Red Leaf.

2 Incl
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RAYMOND P. CAMPBELL, Jr.
Colonel, Armor
Commanding

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